



California Medicine

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EDITORIAL

A Fine Program Well Presented

From first to last, the program and the presentation of the 97th Annual Session of the California Medical Association were a credit to the host, to the scientific sections, to the ten assisting agencies and societies that contributed to the "federated" meeting, to the Committee on Annual Scientific Assemblies of the Scientific Board, and to the association's administrative staff. Even the Weather Man, a sometimes cranky character in San Francisco, must be praised for his kindness on this occasion.

The general meetings, which were excellently conceived and staged with smooth professionalism, had overflow audiences. Six television programs

and four film symposia drew big attendance, as did individual meetings of the various scientific sections. Guest speakers were of a stature to fetch the interest and respect of any audience of physicians anywhere.

Although the list of organizations and persons to whom this association is grateful is too long to be set down here, there is room at least to make particular mention of Dr. John B. Dillon, who as chairman of the Committee on Annual Scientific Assemblies had the prime responsibility for initiating and prosecuting a program that enhanced the reputation of the California Medical Association.

The Baby and the Bath Water

TWO YEARS AGO the baby was born. Its gestation had been turbulent and the delivery somewhat precipitous. It may also have been a little premature, but somehow it survived and quite soon appeared to thrive. Its given name is California Medical Assistance Program. Medi-Cal is its nickname. Early in life it became widely admired for what it was likely to become when it grew up. The gleam when the program was conceived was that it would make it possible for the needy and near needy in California to receive health care within the mainstream of medical practice. It would remove the financial barriers. Government medicine for those in economic need would be indistinguishable from private medicine for those not in economic need.

This principle was accepted although it was known that it would be costly.

In the two years that have passed since its birth, the baby has grown rapidly and it now requires more nourishment than had been anticipated. In many ways it has become more demanding of and annoying to those responsible for its care. In short, the baby is now a problem and, as is usually the case where there are problem children, each member of the family has his own opinion as to who is to blame and what should be done about it.

As this is written Assemblyman Gordon Duffy has just released a Preliminary Report on Medi-Cal from the Assembly Committee on Public Health containing a number of proposals which, according